

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DHA-05 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /091 W

-----058099 211438Z /42

R 211417Z OCT 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0653

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, FR

SUBJECT: CGT COMMENTS ON WFTU AND ETUC

REF: (A) PARIS 30438, (B) PARIS 30287

1. SUMMARY: THE CGT, CITING ITS RECENT POLICY STATE-
MENT ON EASTERN EUROPEAN UNIONS AS AN EXAMPLE OF ITS
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INDEPENDENCE, HAS CALLED FOR A MODIFICATION OF THE
STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS OF THE WFTU SO AS TO MAKE IT
MORE REPRESENTATIVE AND ATTRACTIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
LABOR MOVEMENT, INCLUDING THE "REFORMIST" ELEMENTS.
THE CGT ALSO HAS REPEATED ITS BID TO BE ADMITTED INTO
THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION. END SUMMARY.

2. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO ITS PUBLICATION OF ITS POLICY STATEMENT ON THE EASTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS, THE CGT HELD AN OCTOBER 19 PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH IT DESCRIBED THAT STATEMENT AS INDICATIVE OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE CONFEDERATION; COMPLAINED THAT THE STATEMENT HAD GONE LARGELY IGNORED BY THE PRESS, WHICH HAS BEEN HARRASSING THE CGT ON THE VERY POINT OF ITS INDEPENDENCE; REAFFIRMED ITS DETERMINATION TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF MAN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD; AND ASSERTED THAT LIBERTY IS A BASIC PRINCIPLE IN A SOCIALIST SOCIETY.

3. THE CGT SPOKESMEN (GENERAL SECRETARY SEGUY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SECRETARY DUHAMEL) THEN EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU) HAD TO GROW WITH AND ADAPT TO THE CHANGED CONDITIONS OF THE TIMES, AND IN PARTICULAR, TO THE INCREASE IN THE SIZE AND SOPHISTICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT. THE CGT, THEY SAID, BELIEVES THAT IT IS BOTH "NATURAL AND DESIRABLE" FOR THE TWO TYPES OF UNIONS, THOSE COMMITTED TO CLASS WARFARE, AND THE REFORMISTS, TO JOIN TOGETHER IN ONE ORGANIZATION; AND THEY COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS "AN UNDOUBTED TENDENCY TOWARDS UNITY" IN INTERNATIONAL LABOR CIRCLES.

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4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, THE CGT SPOKESMEN SAID THAT THE WFTU COULD AND SHOULD BECOME A VEHICLE FOR SUCH UNITY, THROUGH PROFOUND CHANGES IN ITS STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT NO LONGER A "TRADE UNION EXPRESSION OF A BLOC" BUT AN ORGANIZATION OF UNITY. SEGUY IDENTIFIED THE WFTU PRAGUE CONGRESS, SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 1978, AS THE TIME AND PLACE TO BRING THAT ORGANIZATION UP TO DATE. DUHAMEL THEN CALLED FOR ETUC TO ADMIT THE CGT, THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FRENCH UNIONS, INTO ITS MEMBERSHIP.

5. COMMENT: QUITE APART FROM THE OBVIOUS CONCERN THE CGT IS HAVING ABOUT THE TARNISHING OF ITS NONPARTISAN IMAGE OVER THE NATIONALIZATIONS ISSUE, THE PRESS CONFERENCE IS INTERESTING BOTH FOR FURTHER LIGHT IT SHEDS ON THE CGT'S INTERNATIONAL ASPIRATIONS, AND FOR THE WAY IT CORRELATES TO A STATEMENT ON THE SAME THEME WHICH IT PUBLISHED A FEW DAYS EARLIER IN ITS WEEKLY FAMILY MAGAZINE LA VIE OUVRIER. ENTITLED: "BRING THE WFTU UP TO DATE WITH OUR TIMES, THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE NINTH WFTU CONGRESS", THE ARTICLE OPENS BY DENOUNCING THE PRESS REPORTS ABOUT A CRISIS IN THE WFTU,

WHICH IT SAYS "OUR ITALIAN COMRADES" HAVE DENIED. IT THEN DESCRIBES THE FORTHCOMING PRAGUE MEETING AS AN OCCASION FOR INTERESTING DISCUSSION AND DEBATES ON THE BEST MEANS OF ADVANCING THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS. THE REST OF THE ARTICLE

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CONSISTS OF QUOTES, INTERSPACED WITH APPROVING INTRO-
DUCTORY LANGUAGE, FROM A SPEECH GIVEN BY WFTU GENERAL
SECRETARY GENSOUS BEFORE A TRANSPORT WORKERS CONGRESS.
IN THAT SPEECH, GENSOUS INDICATED THAT THE PRESENT
STRUCTURES BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT ARE
STILL MARKED BY THEIR ORIGINS IN THE PERIOD OF BLOCS,

AND THAT THE RESULTING RIGIDITIES ARE IMPEDING THE
ABILITY OF THE CLASS-ORIENTED AND REFORMIST UNIONS
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TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF THE WORKERS.
GENSOUS IS THEN QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE PRAGUE
CONGRESS IS INTENDED TO BE OPEN TO FREE DEBATE, WITH
THE THEME BEING TO WORK FOR THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY
OF THE WORKERS. THE QUOTATIONS CONCLUDE WITH GENSOUS'
SPECULATION THAT THESE DEBATES MAY WELL LEAD TO A
RESTRUCTURING OF THE WFTU TO PERMIT IT TO BECOME MORE
ABLE TO DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS, AND HELP
ADVANCE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY. (TEXT BEING POUCHED
TO DEPARTMENT, DOL, AND USEC.)

6. WITHIN THIS CONTEXT, IT APPEARS AT THIS TIME THAT
THE CGT IS NOT EMBARKED ON ANY SOLITARY CAMPAIGN TO
SHAKE UP THE WFTU, BUT RATHER IS COORDINATING ITS
ACTIVITIES WITH THE WFTU, AND OTHERS, IN SETTING THE
STAGE FOR WHAT APPEARS TO BE ANOTHER BIG DRIVE FOR
INTERNATIONAL LABOR UNITY. (THIS ALSO WOULD BE PER-
FECTLY IN KEEPING WITH THE CGT'S GREAT INTEREST, FOR
EXAMPLE, IN OPENING UP AND MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH
THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT; AND ITS PERSISTENT
BEATING ON THE ETUC DOOR.) IT IS FOR THIS REASON
THAT WE ALSO FIND IT VERY INTERESTING THAT CFDT LEADER
EDMOND MAIRE, STILL SEGUY'S ALLY, IS CURRENTLY BERATING
THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR AND PUBLICLY THREATEN-
ING TO LEAVE IT BECAUSE OF, INTER ALIA, DISAGREEMENTS
OVER HOW TO RENOVATE AND UNITE THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR
MOVEMENT.
HARTMAN

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